

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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O 190050Z SEP 73

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 728

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FOR ALFRED HARDING, CU/EA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC (PHILLIPS, BERT)

SUBJ: W/W BURT PHILLIPS

REF: HARDING/PLATT TELCON SEPT 19 (PEKING TIME)

1. AFTER PONDERING ALL AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVES, PHILLIPS DECIDED TO TRAVEL TO TOKYO WITH ORCHESTRA AND TAKE FASTEST DIRECT FLIGHT FROM THERE. HE STILL HOPES THAT SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS CAN GET HIM HOME FASTER THOUGH WE HAVE TOLD HIM THERE LITTLE WE CAN DO HERE.

2. PHILLIPS INFORMED ABOUT DAUGHTER'S DEATH BY ORCHESTRA STAFF DR. VINER UPON RETURN FROM TOUR TO GREAT WALL AND MING TOMBS. AT THAT POINT, USLO DESCRIBED FOR HIM THROUGH ORCHESTRA MANAGEMENT THE COMMERCIAL ALTERNATIVES, AS FOLLOWS:

A. DEPART PEKING SEPTEMBER 19 FOR CANTON, EXITING PRC VIA LOWU SEPTEMBER 20 TO CATCH FLIGHT HOME FROM HONG KONG: ESTIMATED FASTEST ARRIVAL TIME PHILADELPHIA, MORNING, SEPTEMBER 21.

B. DEPART PEKING SEPTEMBER 20 VIA PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL FOR KARACHI TO CONNECT WITH FLIGHTS FOR NEW YORK. ESTIMATED FASTEST ARRIVAL TIME PHILADELPHIA, EVENING SEPTEMBER 21.

C. TRAVEL WITH ORCHESTRA TO TOKYO, THEN SWITCHING TO
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FASTEST DIRECT FLIGHT UPON ARRIVAL.

3. PHILLIPS CONSIDERED ALTERNATIVES, THEN ASKED USLO TO ASCERTAIN FROM CHINESE WHETHER OTHER ALTERNATIVES AVAILABLE, INCLUDING SPECIAL AIRCRAFT, OTHER CHARTERS, ETC. USLO IMMEDIATELY APPROACHED FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION, WHICH AS HOST ORGANIZATION WOULD PROVIDE MOST EFFECTIVE CHANNEL FOR ACTION BY CHINESE GOVERNMENT. QUICK REPLY, RENDERED WITH DEEP SYMPATHY, WAS THAT COMMERCIAL ALTERNATIVES OUTLINED ONLY AVAILABLE MEANS OF TRAVEL. THOUGH TIME WAS SHORT (IT 6:30 PM BY THAT TIME), CHINESE WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO GET PHILLIPS ON PLANE TO CANTON THE NEXT MORNING, IF THAT WAS HIS DECISION. USLO RELAYED MESSAGE TO PHILLIPS, WHO DECIDED ABOUT 9:00 PM TO TRAVEL TO TOKYO WITH ORCHESTRA, IF NO OTHER SPECIAL MEANS OF TRAVEL AVAILABLE. HE STILL BELIEVES THAT SPECIAL EFFORTS WILL GET HIM HOME FASTER, AND HOPES THAT HIS FAMILY WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS FROM THE U.S. END, DESPITE USLO EFFORTS TO EXPLAIN THAT WE HAVE DONE ALL WE CAN. HE HAS TOLD USLO THAT FAMILY SITUATION "UNDER CONTROL" THOUGH HE WOULD NATURALLY LIKE TO BE WITH THEM AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

4. ORCHESTRA MANAGEMENT THINKS THAT PHILLIPS DECISION TO TRAVEL WITH ORCHESTRA TO TOKYO IS SOUND, BELIEVING IT BETTER FOR HIM TO BE WITH FRIENDS ON SURE IF SOMEWHAT SLOWER ROUTE HOME THAN TRAVELLING ALONG ON LESS CERTAIN ROUTE VIA CANTON. BRUCE

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